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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/973,179	10/05/2001	Cory M. Panattoni	002558-065010US	4474

20350            7590            04/08/2003

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EXAMINER

OLSEN, KAJ K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1753	6

DATE MAILED: 04/08/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

<b>Application No.</b> 09/973,179	<b>Applicant(s)</b> PANATTONI ET AL.	
<b>Examiner</b> Kaj Olsen	<b>Art Unit</b> 1753	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1)  Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2a)  This action is FINAL.
- 2b)  This action is non-final.
- 3)  Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4)  Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6)  Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9)  The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10)  The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a)  accepted or b)  objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11)  The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a)  approved b)  disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12)  The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13)  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a)  All b)  Some \* c)  None of:  
1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14)  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a)  The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15)  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1)  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2)  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3)  Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4)  Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5)  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6)  Other:

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:  
  
The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
2. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
3. Claim 7 only refers to a singular "said plate" whereas the claim it dependent from only referred to plural plates. For the purpose of examination, the examiner will interpret the plate of claim 7 as being the plural plates of claim 1.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:  
  
A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –  
  
(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.
2. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wiktorowicz et al (USP 6,013,165).
3. Wiktorowicz discloses a pre-cast polyacrylamide slab gel for use in slab gel electrophoresis comprising a pair of chemically inert, transparent plates having a polyacrylamide

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gel therebetween (fig. 2 and 4, col. 1, lines 35-40, and paragraph bridging col. 12 and 13).

Wiktorowicz also teaches that the various surfaces that come into contact with the gel (which would include the plates) be coated with materials such as polyvinyl alcohol or polyethylene glycol (col. 8, lines 1-16), which claims 2 and 3 of the instant invention evidence are nonionic amphiphilic polymers. With respect to the use of glass and plastic for the plates, see col. 5, lines 20-31.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moi et al (USP 5,938,906) in view of Sugimoto et al (USP 4,897,306).

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7. Moi discloses a cassette for the formation of slab gels that comprises a pair of transparent plates that are chemically inert and transparent (col. 5, lines 8-15) with a polyacrylamide gel cast therebetween (col. 1, lines 22-30). Moi does not explicitly disclose having the inner surfaces be coated with a nonionic amphiphilic polymer. Sugimoto teaches coating the inner surfaces of the gel supports (i.e. the plates) with an intermediate resin layer that has low oxygen permeability (col. 4, lines 12-24). One of the resins utilized is polyvinyl alcohol, which claim 2 of the instant invention evidences is an amphiphilic polymer. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was being made to utilize the teaching of Sugimoto for the slab gel of Moi in order to minimize the interference of oxygen during gel preparation.

8. With respect to the use of glass, plastic, or polystyrene-acrylonitrile, see Moi, col. 5, lines 8-15 and line 29.

9. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiktorowicz in view of Moi.

10. Wiktorowicz teaches all of the limitations of the claim, but did not explicitly teach the use of plates formed of a polystyrene-acrylonitrile blend. Moi teaches a number of different plastics utilized for gel casting including a polystyrene-acrylonitrile blend (SAN) (col. 5, line 12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was being made to utilize the teaching of Moi for the slab gel of Wiktorowicz because SAN is a conventional plastic that has found utility in gel casting and the substitution of one known material for another known material requires only routine skill in the art.

*Allowable Subject Matter*

11. Claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

12. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art does not disclose nor render obvious a pre-cast slab gel comprising a coating of polyvinylidene chloride between the plates and the coating of nonionic amphiphilic polymer.

*Conclusion*

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Kolner teaches the use of coatings to prevent gel sticking (col. 4, lines 21-25).

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kaj Olsen whose telephone number is (703) 305-0506. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:00 AM-4:30 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Nam Nguyen, can be reached at (703) 308-3322.

When filing a fax in Group 1700, please indicate in the header "Official" for papers that are to be entered into the file, and "Unofficial" for draft documents and other communications with the PTO that are not for entry into the file of this application. This will expedite processing of your papers. The fax number for regular communications is (703) 305-3599 and the fax number for after-final communications is (703) 305-5408.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist, whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Kaj K. Olsen  
Patent Examiner  
AU 1753  
April 7, 2003